

MFIP participants who are considered “unemployable” may be eligible for an extension of MFIP benefits. It is helpful to think about this category as an extension for individuals who are unemployable because they are experiencing multiple and severe issues that significantly impact their ability to work. Participants who demonstrate they are able to work in unsubsidized employment should not be extended in this category.

Participants extended in the unemployable category are considered an FSS participant and ARE REQUIRED to develop an Employment Plan **for FSS participants** and follow FSS service requirements. Hourly requirements and activities should be appropriate to the participant’s abilities and included in the Employment Plan.

NOTE: Mental and chemical health treatment may be included in the plan on a voluntary basis.

DETERMINATION OF WHETHER THE PARTICIPANT IS UNEMPLOYABLE

Before determining whether an MFIP participant is unemployable for purposes of this extension, counties and Employment Services Providers should assess whether he or she is eligible for an extension under a different category. If he or she does not meet the criteria for another extension category, but appears to have significant and severe issues that impact their ability to work, a determination of unemployability should be done by a vocational rehabilitation specialist or another qualified professional designated by the county.

There is no single factor or cluster of factors which would indicate unemployability, but take the following into consideration:

- The participant’s work history over the past 5 years. If the person has worked, review his or her work history and the reason or reasons the participant left employment to determine whether any barriers exist which prevent the participant from maintaining a job. If the participant has not worked, review the reason he or she has not been employed to identify any barriers to employment.
- Extremely limited ability to speak or understand English, despite efforts to learn it. There must be documentation of the participant’s efforts to learn English.
- Felony record that inhibits employment in existing positions.
- Other severe and chronic mental health or chemical dependency issues that have not been professionally certified because the nature of the illness interfere with the participant’s ability to seek assessment or treatment. There must be

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documentation of the agency or other professionals attempt to engage the participant in necessary services.

NOTE: Factors such as lack of child care, transportation, or housing, while they may be significant barriers to employment, do not in and of themselves constitute a basis for unemployability.

After reviewing the above, determine whether there are any factors that would result in the participant being unable to work. If there are not significant factors that would result in the participant being unable to work, he or she is considered employable and is NOT eligible for an extension. If the participant cannot work, determine whether he or she could work with a reasonable investment of available supports to address his or her limitations.

- If yes, these supports must be provided. The participant is not eligible for a hardship extension under the category of “unemployable”, but may qualify for another extension.
- If no, the county must document the lack of available supports, and the participant may be extended as “unemployable”. When appropriate, the county should assist a participant who is assessed as “unemployable” to apply for SSI.

See §13.3 (60-Month Lifetime Limit) for an explanation of the 60-month lifetime limit and exceptions. See §13.15 (Hardship Extensions) for general information and requirements for hardship extensions. Also see §13.18 (Hard to Employ Extensions).